

THE LONDON DAILY NEWS

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06 January, 2009 11:39 (GMT +00:00)

BBC blackout on Gaza

Article	Video	Photos
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By News Editor Declan Wilkes

The London Daily News has learned there is an informal news blackout at BBC Radio over the mounting public outrage following the Gaza incursion by Israeli troops.

According to sources, radio station phone in's have been screening out any callers wanting to talk about the Israeli air strikes and ground offensives in the Middle East.

The BBC's *Have Your Say* comment sites are being heavily moderated - its main board 'How can a truce be achieved in Gaza?' has had half of its 4,500 comments rejected on the basis of defamation, incitement to crime and hate, harassment, abuse, threats, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, homophobic or racially offensive language.

On the board 'Are the Israeli strikes on Gaza justified?' Half of the 5,000 comments have also been removed for breaking the House Rules stated above.

Radio ban

Video



Producers and presenters have been told to 'stay away' from the subject despite thousands taking to the streets the past few weeks in protest and support of the military action that has seen 600 killed and just recently 40 dead from an air strike at a school.

The self imposed ban has also been reflected in commercial radio with stations like Talksport rarely wanting to broach the subject and many others clearly steering away from on-air debates on the topic. LBC has attempted to tackle the subject with on air debates.

Why?

Radio bosses are keen not to enflame the situation and leave themselves open to accusations of bias toward one side or another - the Beeb, still reeling from the Jonathan Ross affair is in no mood for any controversy.

Also there is a responsible editorial reason behind the scaling back of listener comment.

Today we reported on the increase of anti-Semitism on London's streets, the attempted torching of a Synagogue, 24 attacks in total and the appearance of sickening graffiti saying "Kill Jews" and "Jews are scumbags" across the city.

By taking the heat out of the debate it cools an already charged atmosphere, though that will have no effect on the most agitated and likely to let their feelings spill out on the street in direct action.

The denying of debate in a public forum such as the BBC could also leave organisations open to accusations of curtailing freedom of expression.

'We'll kill Jews abroad'

Tension is high in London between Jewish areas of Golders Green, North Finchely, Stanmore, Stanford Hill and St John's Wood which are receiving extra "reassurance patrols" by police and Muslim areas of West Ham, Tower Hamlets, Southall, Hackney, Stoke Newington and Camden.

The heightened sensitivity on the airwaves and chat rooms comes in the wake of chilling comments by the Hamas leader that they will kill Jewish children anywhere in the world in revenge for the devastating attacks of the past few weeks. Mahmoud Zahar said:

"They have legitimised the murder of their own children by killing the children of Palestine. They have legitimised the killing of their people all over the world by killing our people."

Speaking to the Times, Mark Gardner, of the Jewish charity Community Security Trust, warned Jews:

"When the Hamas leadership calls for revenge attacks on Jewish people, we have to be very, very concerned about what that means."

Violent embassy protests

Meanwhile pro-Palestinian protesters continue to mass outside the Israeli embassy in a demo they vow will last all week despite the plunging temperatures.

A wave of anti-Israeli feeling spread over the city this weekend when large rallies were held across the city culminating in angry exchanges and clashes with the police as they fought to protect the Kensington embassy from attack.

Hundreds of demonstrators ripped up and hurled barriers threw sticks and missiles and attempted to rush the building.

Roads were closed and police in riot gear had to contain the 5,000 strong crowds on Kensington High Street. Protesters burned the Israeli flag and labeled the country a terrorist state.

Police say they are working with Muslims to insure protests pass off peacefully with non

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Jews under attack across Europe

Jews are on their guard across the continent as young disaffected Muslims bring the conflict in the Middle East to the capitals of Europe.

In Paris on Saturday riot police had to separate the 25,000 pro-Palestinian and 4,000 pro-Israeli demonstrators outside the Israeli embassy.

The National Bureau of Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism in France reported petrol bomb and hate attacks on synagogues, there have been similar reports in Belgium.

Text Comments

[Post a Text Comment](#)

James Ryan

Date Added: Wednesday 07 January, 2009

I am sorry to disagree with you. You have obviously not been listening to LBC. There have been constant phone-ins on the subject from all points of view.] Callers are not encouraged to ring in on random subjects, but on the subject that has been introduced by the presenter. Therefore there has been many, many callers on the subject on the station.

Frances Hill

Date Added: Wednesday 07 January, 2009

I think it quite obvious there was a distinctive shift in the BBC and other noted media sources around 2000-2001. The push-back has gotten stronger now and I have a feeling that the Zionists are not going to find the same control and tolerance for barbarisms, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the like as they have found in more recent times.

declan wilkey

Date Added: Wednesday 07 January, 2009

James - what we are refering to is call in's and listener contributions, of which talk radio is very much reliant on. News wise, all media are covering the event but we have it on good authority that the public contribution to radio shows is being discouraged and that some presenters have been told to stay away from the subject.

James Ryan

Date Added: Tuesday 06 January, 2009

Well I certainly know LBC have covered the war extensively. Since yesterday, Nick Ferrari has had an independent researcher, speakers from both sides of the conflict, including the Editor of a leading Arab newspaper, and the Israeli Ambassador in England. The subject has also dominated other programmes on the station.

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